



STRONG LOCAL DC ORGANIZATIONS. EXISTING LOCAL "ORGANIZATIONS" ARE NOT REALLY ORGANS AVAILABLE TO NATIONAL PARTY AS SUCH, SINCE THEY EXIST ONLY FOR FACTION-RELATED ACTIVITIES. DC, THEREFORE, IS FAILING TO PROVIDE CULTURAL MEDIATION FOR VOTERS AT LOCAL LEVEL. FORTHCOMING DC CONGRESS IS CRUCIAL FOR PARTY. IT MUST DECIDE TO CHANGE DC IN STYLE AND SUBSTANCE AND CONVEY TO PUBLIC THAT IT IS PREPARED TO UNDERTAKE NEW DIRECTIONS.

4. GIVEN MULTIPLE CRISES OF COUNTRY AND PRESENT REALITIES OF DC PARTY, PRESENT PARTY SECRETARY ZACCAGNINI STANDS BEST CHANCE FOR CHANGING PUBLIC IMAGE OF DC. ZACCAGNINI HAS DEVELOPED EXTERNAL SUPPORT AMONG YOUNG AND AMONG CATHOLIC GROUPS WHICH, IF TRANSLATED INTO INTERNAL PARTY SUPPORT WILL STRENGTHEN HIS CHANCES FOR CONTINUING AS DC SECRETARY. ALTHOUGH A MAN OF LEFT, ZACCAGNINI IS GAINING SUPPORT AMONG MODERATES. NOTING THAT DC IN JUNE 15 ELECTIONS LOST 6 PERCENT OF ITS VOTES TO LEFT, HE SAID THAT ZACCAGNINI, AS MAN OF DC LEFT, WILL BE ABLE STOP THIS IMPORTANT LEADAGE. HIS CHANCES TO GIVE PARTY NEW IMAGE WOULD BE SUBSTANTIALLY ENHANCED IF FORLANI WOULD ENDORSE HIM, AND THIS MAY BE POSSIBLE BECAUSE FORLANI DOES NOT APPEAR AS IF HE WOULD FIGHT HARD FOR POSITION. ZACCAGNINI HAS ALREADY DEMONSTRATED AN OPEN ZSTYLE". HIS "THINK TANK", WHICH WAS DOMINATED BY LEFTISTS, HAS BEEN EXPANDED TO INCLUDE MODERATES, AND HE HAS AGREED TO MORE OPENNESS IN CONGRESS AND TO INVITING CATHOLIC GROUP REPRESENTATIVES TO PARTICIPATE IN CONGRESS WITHOUT VOTE, BUT WITH RIGHT TO SPEAK. (THIS IS A MAJOR CHANGE SINCE UP TO NOW ONLY REGISTERED PARTY MEMBERS COULD PARTICIPATE IN CONGRESS.) ALTHOUGH ZACCAGNINI WAS NOT KNOWN FOR ORGANIZATIONAL TALENTS, SORGE BELIEVES THAT HE IS CAPABLE OF ATTRACTING COMPETENT PEOPLE TO RUN PARTY ORGANIZATIONS.

#### 5. THE PCI AND THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE

EVEN IF PCI SECRETARY BERLINGUER IS SINCERE IN STATING THAT PCI WILL RESPECT DEMOCRATIC PLURALISM IF IT COMES TO POWER, NO ONE HAS YET DEMONSTRATED THAT "LOCAL COMMUNISM" CAN ESCAPE LOGIC OF MARXISM/LENINISM TOWARD DICTATORSHIP. THE PCI, IN FACT, IS MONOLITHIC. HOWEVER, THIS IS SOMETHING WHICH ITALIANS IN GENERAL AND INTELLECTUALS AND JOURNALISTS DO NOT FOCUS UPON. BUT THIS IS THEME WHICH HE AND "CIVILTA" HAVE BEEN STRESSING IN ARGUING AGAINST HISTORIC COMPROMISE. WHETHER PCI MAINTAINS ELECTORAL MOM-

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ENTUM IT DEMONSTRATED JUNE 15 IS PRIMARILY RELATED TO WHAT DIRECTION DC TAKES IN FORTHCOMING CONGRESS. MEANWHILE, CHURCH'S ANTI-MARXIST STAND HAS HAD DESIRED EFFECT OF REAWAKENING CATHOLIC GROUPS TO ACTION TO DEFEND "CHRISTIAN IDENTITY" ON CONCRETE ISSUES, PARTICULARLY IN COMMUNIST-GOVERNED REGIONS, SUCH AS UMBRIA, WHERE CATHOLIC INSTITUTIONS HAVE SUFFERED DISCRIMINATION AND ARE NOW ACTIVELY DEMANDING REDRESS. REGARDING ROME'S COMMUNAL ELECTIONS, FATHER SORGE WAS NOT OPTIMISTIC THAT DC WOULD HOLD LINE

IF THESE WERE HELD THIS SPRING. ALTHOUGH CHURCH WAS ACTIVE IN ROME AND IT WAS ENCOUNTERING RESPONSIVENESS ON PART OF CATHOLIC GROUPS ON ANTI-MARXIST THEME, THE DC HAD NOT PURSUED AN ACTIVE PROGRAM IN COMMUNE OF ROME WHICH WOULD ATTRACT VOTERS.

6. THE CHURCH, CATHOLIC GROUPS AND ITALIAN POLITICS

THE JUNE 15 ELECTIONS WERE TRAUMATIC FOR CHURCH. THE ANALYSIS OF ELECTORAL RESULTS NOT ONLY REVEALED RELATIVE DYNAMISM OF PCI AT REGIONAL AND LOCAL LEVELS AND THE STALENESS AND EVEN RETROGRESSION OF DC, BUT ALSO THE INCOHERENCE AND ATROPHY OF CATHOLIC GROUPS. THE ONLY CLEAR AND EFFECTIVE CATHOLIC GROUP PRESENCE IN ELECTIONS WAS COMUNIONE E LIBERAZIONE'S (CL) PRESENCE IN NORTHERN ITALY. STARTING FROM THIS REALITY, THE CHURCH DECIDED RELUCTANTLY TO URGE PUBLICLY FOR REAWAKENING OF CATHOLIC GROUPS TO PROVIDE SOCIO-CULTURAL MEDIATION WHICH DC FAILED TO PERFORM. THIS EFFORT WAS EVIDENT IN DECLARATIONS OF CARDINAL POLETTI LAST OCTOBER AND SINCE THEN IN THOSE OF POPE PAUL AND ITALIAN CHURCH HIERARCHY. HE STATED, HOWEVER, THAT THIS DID NOT REPRESENT A BREAK WITH CENTRAL LINE OF VATICAN DISENGAGEMENT FROM DIRECT POLITICAL ACTIVITY IN ITALY AND IMPLIED THAT POPE'S ADVISERS, AS WELL AS ITALIAN HIERARCHY, WERE STILL SPLIT ON EXTENT OF CHURCH INVOLVEMENT.

7. THE EFFORT AT REAWAKENING CATHOLIC GROUPS HAS PROMISING PROSPECTS:

-- CL HAS POTENTIAL: IT HAS ATTRACTED YOUTH, HAS SHOWN COURAGE AND SPIRIT, IS EVEN ACTIVE AMONG WORKERS AND HAS NOW ARRIVED AT NATIONAL LEVEL.

-- CATHOLIC GROUPS ARE RESURFACING THROUGHOUT COUNTRY AND CAN BE EXPECTED TO REMAIN ACTIVE ON SOCIO-POLITICAL ISSUES.

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-- SOME CATHOLIC GROUPS HAVE ACTUALLY CHANGED THEIR POSITIONS. ACLI, THE 500,000 STRONG CATHOLIC WORKERS' MOVEMENT, WHICH HAD HARBORED GROUP OF "CHRISTIAN DISSENTERS," RECENTLY DECLARED IT REJECTED "MARXIST CHOICE" AND PLEDGED TO ACT ON SOCIO-POLITICAL ISSUES IN ACCORD WITH TEACHING OF CHURCH AND IN HARMONY WITH BISHOPS' CONFERENCE.

-- ITALIAN BISHOPS' CONFERENCE WILL REMAIN ACTIVE. ITS COUNCIL WILL CONTINUE ITS MEETINGS THIS SPRING AND MANY WORKING GROUPS WILL BE IN SESSION IN PREPARATION FOR NATIONAL ASSEMBLY THIS FALL. THUS, "CATHOLIC" PRESENCE WILL BE VISIBLE ON ITALIAN SCENE DURING REMAINDER OF YEAR.

8. COMMENT: SORGE'S COMMENTS GENERALLY REINFORCE CLIMATE OF PESSIMISM WHICH IS PREVALENT ON EVE OF DC NATIONAL CONGRESS AND

REPORTED IN EMBASSY'S LAST MONTHLY REPORT (ROME 3622). WE NOTE, HOWEVER, RAY OF HOPE THAT CHURCH IS SUFFICIENTLY ENGAGED IN BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EFFORT OF PERSUASION AIMED AT CONVINCING DC TO ADOPT NEW DIRECTIONS. SORGE'S COMMENT ON ZACCAGNINI EFFECTIVENESS AND PROSPECTS AMPLIFY EMBASSY ANALYSIS IN ROME 3433, E.G. THAT ZACCAGNINI HAS WON SUBSTANTIAL SUPPORT OF "COLLATERAL" CATHOLIC GROUPS IN HIS EFFORT TO REMOLD PARTY IMAGE.VOLPE

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